

VZCZCXRO8196
PP RUEHKN RUEHKN RUEHKN
DE RUEHKN #0179 3390855
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P R 040855Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY KOLONIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2160
INFO RUEHJM/AMEMBASSY MAJURO 0386
RUEHKN/AMEMBASSY KOROR 0294
RUEHSV/AMEMBASSY SUVA 0048
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0020
RHMFIUU/COMNAVMAIRIANAS GU
RHHJJPI/PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI
RUEHKN/AMEMBASSY KOLONIA 2521

UNCLAS KOLONIA 000179

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [FM](#)

SUBJECT: UN OPENING OFFICE IN THE FSM, LOOKING TO COORDINATE WITH THE
USG

¶1. (U) Summary: The UN officially opened a Joint Presence (JP) Office in Pohnpei on December 1 and during meetings with Emboffs stressed the importance of coordinating efforts with the USG regarding assistance programs in the FSM. End Summary.

The Office

¶2. (U) The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) will operate the UN Joint Presence office in Kolonia, FSM on behalf of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The FSM national government is paying rent for the office, which is situated in the heart of Kolonia. Although only opening with one local hire, UNFPA representative and Director for Pacific Sub-Regional Office, based in Suva, Najib M. Assifi, expects to hire a second staff person in 2009 and that UN technical experts and senior officers will visit the FSM quarterly.

¶3. (U) During a December 2 meeting with the diplomatic community Assifi, UN Coordination Specialist Ashok Sayenju, UNICEF Representative for Pacific Island Countries Isiye Ndombi, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Toily Kurbanov, and United Nations Development Fund for Women Regional Program Manager Rita Taphorn reviewed their goals for the JP office in the FSM. Although specific focuses ranged from prenatal care to training legislatures to advocating for environmental protection and social change, each of the speakers commented on trying to launch projects to support Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In the FSM, this will include trying to develop reliable data and means of data collection that will support FSM governments' efforts, including at the state and national levels, to submit appropriate projects to the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) for Compact funding. Use of the MDGs as universally accepted development metrics allows for pragmatic comparisons, UN officials said. The FSM Office of Statistics, Budget, Overseas Assistance and Compact Management (SBOC) is reportedly now working on a MDG statistical report.

¶4. (U) At a colorful opening ceremony of the new JP office on December 1, UN officials emphasized their intention to work with "agents of change" in the FSM and to help the Micronesians find their own solutions. Under the UN organizational umbrella, they were clearly looking for development partners and aiming to deliver benefits at the grass roots level. Altogether, they intend to launch seven JP offices in the Pacific, all operating within a program framework for 2008-2012. Joint Presence offices will be able to draw upon the development expertise of some 15 UN agencies, according to Kurbanov.

Coordination with the USG

¶5. (U) Assifi and the other delegation members repeatedly

stressed the need to coordinate any efforts in the FSM with the U.S. Embassy for inclusion of DOI. Assifi commented that any programs in the FSM must take into account the funding coming through DOI and the Amended Compact of Free Association Obligations. It is important for the UN not only to not duplicate DOI efforts, but to complement DOI funded programs. The funding and efforts by DOI are clearly preponderant in the FSM; to not align UN efforts with DOI efforts would only work to the detriment of the UN and FSM development. Assifi commented that he hoped the regular UN visitors to FSM could meet with the appropriate Embassy and DOI officers whenever they visited.

Comment

16. (U) The opening of the JP Office in Kolonia has promising, positive potential to help the FSM meet its development goals and to complement ongoing Compact related projects. If the focus truly is coordination with the donor community, particularly the U.S., and helping the FSM become better planners and implementers of DOI funded projects, the FSM can expect to see measurable progress in coming years. If, on the other hand, the office remains simply a presence with intermittent visitors who are not coordinating efforts properly, then the office will become just one more agency looking for regular reports. The potential benefit to the FSM through joint support of DOI and UN goals is clear, but only with active and consistent engagement of all involved. End Comment.

HUGHES